

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An appliance which only has an INTERNET mode of operation and a TV mode of operation:

said appliance having the capability of connecting the appliance to the Internet and concomitantly displaying a worldwide web home page;

said appliance also having the capability of bringing up and displaying pages which are directly or indirectly linked to said home page; and

said appliance further having the capability, when the appliance is switched out of its INTERNET mode and then back into said mode, of returning to a web page displayed when the appliance was switched out of the INTERNET mode.

2. An appliance as defined in claim 1 which also has the capability, selectable by a user of the appliance, of returning to the worldwide web home page when the appliance is switched from the TV mode to the INTERNET mode.

3. An appliance as defined in claim 1 which, if switched out of the TV mode and then back to the TV mode, will return to the channel which was active when the appliance was switched out of the TV mode.

4. An appliance which comprises:
an integrated unit with only TV and INTERNET operating modes; and an input device for transmitting data to said integrated unit by signals in a selected part of the electromagnetic spectrum.

5. An appliance as defined in claim 4 in which the input device has the capability of generating and transmitting signals in the infrared portion of the electromagnetic spectrum.

6. An appliance as defined in claim 4 in which the input device is a remote control.

7. An appliance as defined in claim 4 in which the input device is a keyboard.

8. An appliance as defined in claim 4 in which the input device has exactly two mode selection controls, said controls being a TV control and an INTERNET control.

9. An appliance as defined in claim 4 which has an input device with the following controls:

BACK and NEXT controls for moving backwards and forwards through Internet web pages;

a set of LEFT, RIGHT, UP and DOWN scroll controls for moving a page relative to a screen component of the appliance;

a second, separate set of LEFT, RIGHT, UP and DOWN buttons for moving a cursor about the screen component of the appliance; and

a GO control used to bring up a web page indicated by the cursor.

10. An appliance as defined in claim 9 in which the input device has an OPTIONS control operable to bring up on the screen component a menu of choices available to a user of the appliance, said OPTIONS control being usable in both the TV and INTERNET modes of operation of the appliance.

11. An appliance as defined in claim 9 which has a STOP control operable with the appliance in its INTERNET mode of operation to terminate the downloading of an Internet file.

12. An appliance as defined in claim 9 which has a PAUSE control operable with the appliance in its INTERNET mode of operation to first stop the downloading of a web file and to then cause the downloading of the file to continue from the point where it was stopped.

13. An appliance as defined in claim 9 in which the input device has a numerical keypad.

14. An appliance as defined in claim 9 in which the input device has a keyboard with keys corresponding to the letters of the alphabet.

15. An appliance as defined in claim 4 in which said integrated unit is of the stand alone type and is constructed to sit on a horizontal surface.

16. An appliance as defined in claim 4 in which the integrated unit has the capability of being mounted to an overhead structure.

17. An apparatus as defined in claim 4 wherein the capabilities of the integrated unit are provided by operating components which include:

a video switch/display driver;

an audio switch/speaker driver;

an INTERNET controller operatively connected to the video switch/display driver and the audio switch/speaker driver; and

a television controller/digital tuner also operatively connected to the video switch/display driver and the audio switch/speaker driver.

18. An appliance as defined in claim 17 in which the television controller/digital tuner has a connection for a television cable or antenna and the Internet controller has Ethernet, USB, and phone line connections.

19. An appliance which can be turned on and off and has an INTERNET mode of operation and an INTERNET mode control for selecting that mode of operation; said appliance having the capability of coming on in the INTERNET mode if, when the application is off, a user activates the INTERNET mode control.

20. An appliance as defined in claim 19 which has a TV mode of operation and an ON-OFF control and wherein, if a user activates the ON-OFF control when the appliance is off, the appliance will come on in the TV mode.

21. An appliance as defined in claim 20 which has a TV mode control and wherein, if a user activates the TV control when the appliance is off, the appliance will come on in its TV mode of operation.

22. An appliance as defined in claim 19 which has the capability, when the appliance is switched out of its INTERNET mode and then back into said mode, of returning to a web page displayed when the appliance was switched out of the INTERNET mode.

23. An appliance as defined in claim 19 which has a TV mode of operation and the capability, selectable by a user of the appliance, of returning to a worldwide web home page when the appliance is switched from the TV mode to the INTERNET mode.

24. An appliance as defined in claim 19 which, if switched out of the TV mode and then back to the TV mode, will return to the channel which was active when the appliance was switched out of the TV mode.